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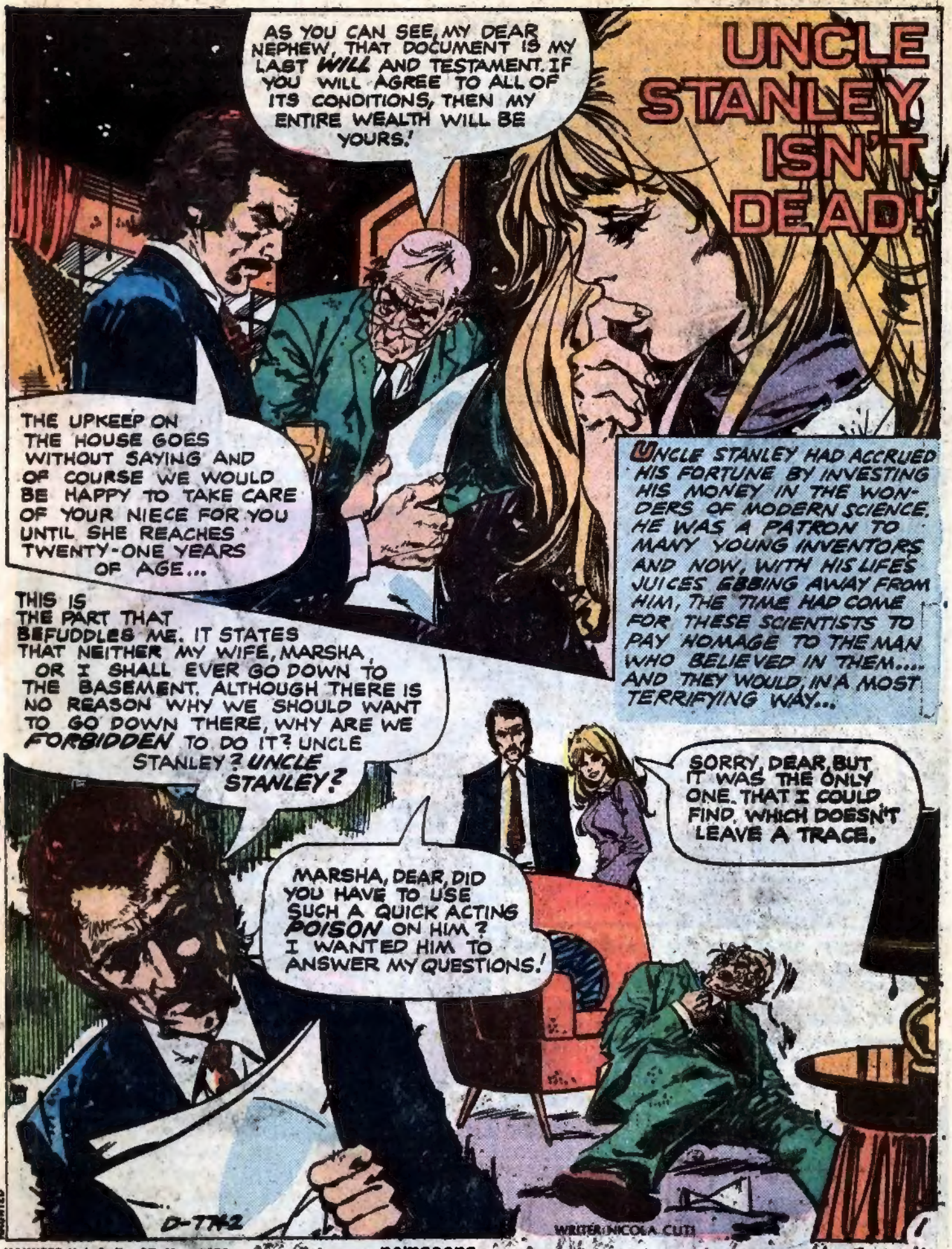
UNCLE STANLEY ISN'T DEAD!
AS YOU CAN SEE, MY DEAR NEPHEW, THAT DOCUMENT IS MY LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT. IF YOU WILL AGREE TO ALL OF ITS CONDITIONS, THEN MY ENTIRE WEALTH WILL BE YOURS!
THE UPKEEP ON THE HOUSE GOES WITHOUT SAYING AND OF COURSE WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR NIECE FOR YOU UNTIL SHE REACHES TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF AGE...
UNCLE STANLEY HAD ACCRUED HIS FORTUNE BY INVESTING HIS MONEY IN THE WONDERS OF MODERN SCIENCE. HE WAS A PATRON TO MANY YOUNG INVENTORS AND NOW, WITH HIS LIFES JUICES EBBING AWAY FROM HIM, THE TIME HAD COME FOR THESE SCIENTISTS TO PAY HOMAGE TO THE MAN WHO BELIEVED IN THEM.... AND THEY WOULD, IN A MOST TERRIFYING WAY...
THIS IS THE PART THAT BEFUDDLES ME. IT STATES THAT NEITHER MY WIFE, MARSHA, OR I SHALL EVER GO DOWN TO THE BASEMENT. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO REASON WHY WE SHOULD WANT TO GO DOWN THERE, WHY ARE WE FORBIDDEN TO DO IT? UNCLE STANLEY? UNCLE STANLEY?
SORRY, DEAR, BUT IT WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT I COULD FIND, WHICH DOESN'T LEAVE A TRACE.
MARSHA, DEAR, DID YOU HAVE TO USE SUCH A QUICK ACTING POISON ON HIM? I WANTED HIM TO ANSWER MY QUESTIONS!
D-TRAZ
WRITER: NICOLA CUTI
HAUNTED

HAUNTED Vol. 6, No. 27, May, 1976.

nomscans

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UNCLE STANLEY HAD BEEN VERY CLOSE TO HIS LITTLE NIECE AND HAD RAISED THE CHILD WHEN HER PARENTS HAD DIED. SHE WAS VISITING FRIENDS WHEN HER UNCLE HAD PASSED AWAY BUT SHE WAS BROUGHT HOME IN TIME FOR THE FUNERAL.

POOR LITTLE NORA. FIRST HER PARENTS AND NOW HER BE-LOVED UNCLE STANLEY. BUT DON'T WORRY, CHILD, BECAUSE WE'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU.

WE'LL RAISE YOU AS IF YOU WERE OUR OWN LITTLE GIRL!

PAUL, THE HOUSE IS SUCH A LONELY PLACE. COULD WE REMOVE ALL OF THOSE MODERN GADGETS THAT UNCLE STANLEY HAD INSTALLED AND HIRE SOME SERVANTS?

I'M AFRAID NOT, MARSHA. IT'S IN THE WILL THAT THE HOUSE IS TO REMAIN AS IT IS.

THE HOUSE APPEARED TO BE AN ENORMOUS, ANGRY FACE WATCHING THE UNWELCOMED GUESTS ARRIVE.

THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT NOW THAT WE'RE IN CHARGE OF THE OLD PLACE AND UNCLE STANLEY'S DEAD!

AUNT MARSHA, COULD I HAVE SOME WARM MILK BEFORE I GO TO BED? I'M CHILLY AND IT WOULD MAKE ME FEEL BETTER!

SO, GET IT YOURSELF! WE DON'T HAVE ANY SERVANTS HERE, THANKS TO YOUR UNCLE STANLEY, AND I HAVE NO INTENTION OF BECOMING ONE.

THE FIRST OF UNCLE STANLEY'S GADGETS THAT ONE ENCOUNTERED UPON ENTERING THE HOUSE WAS THE ELECTRONIC EYE WHICH AUTOMATICALLY OPENED THE FRONT DOOR.

THAT'S THE FIRST THING I WANT DISCONNECTED. THE DOOR WILL OPEN FOR ANYONE, EVEN A THIEF OR A...

MURDERER. ALL RIGHT. I SUPPOSE THAT I COULD MAKE A FEW CHANGES IN THE HOUSE WITH-OUT VIOLATING THE WILL.

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH HER, PAUL? SHE'S GOING TO GET IN OUR WAY AND WHEN SHE'S TWENTY-ONE SHE'LL BE TAKING MONEY FROM THE ESTATE... FROM *OUR* ESTATE!

I'LL TAKE CARE OF HER THE WAY I TOOK CARE OF UNCLE STANLEY, BUT NOT RIGHT AWAY OR THE POLICE WILL BECOME SUSPICIOUS!

NORA KNEW THE HOUSE BETTER THAN ANYONE ALIVE...

HOUSE, COULD I HAVE A GLASS OF WARM MILK PLEASE, AND COULD YOU ALSO PUT A SCOOP OF HONEY INTO THE GLASS?

BUT, HOUSE, WHY SHOULD I GO INTO THE *BASEMENT*?

JUST DO AS I SAY AND STOP CALLING ME *HOUSE*. I'M YOUR UNCLE *STANLEY*!

BY MIDNIGHT ALL THE NOISES IN THE HOUSE HAD SETTLED DOWN TO THE HUM OF THE ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT... WHEN

CERTAINLY, NORA. AFTER YOU HAVE YOUR MILK I WANT YOU TO COME INTO THE BASEMENT BUT BE CERTAIN THAT NEITHER YOUR AUNT MARSHA OR YOUR UNCLE PAUL SEE YOU!

PAUL, WAKE UP! THERE'S SOMEONE OPENING THE DOOR TO OUR ROOM. I TOLD YOU THAT WE SHOULD HAVE HAD THE FRONT DOOR DISCONNECTED!

YOU KILLED UNCLE STANLEY! HE'S GOING TO GET HIS REVENGE FOR *POISONING* HIM. HE TOLD ME. UNCLE STANLEY *ISN'T* DEAD!

DID YOU HEAR WHAT SHE SAID? SHE SAID *POISON*, NOT JUST KILLED. SHE MUST HAVE OVERHEARD US. WE HAVE TO GET RID OF HER!

SUPPOSE SHE DOESN'T FORGET? SUPPOSE SHE WASN'T SLEEP-WALKING?

THEN WE'LL HAVE TO KILL HER RIGHT AWAY. BUT BEFORE WE TAKE SUCH A DRASTIC STEP, I WANT YOU TO QUESTION HER. FIND OUT ALL YOU CAN WHILE I'M AT WORK TOMORROW!

WE CAN'T KILL HER NOW. I TOLD YOU THAT. SHE WAS JUST SLEEPWALK-ING AND HAPPENED TO GUESS CORRECTLY. BY TOMORROW SHE'LL HAVE FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING SHE SAID!

THE NEXT DAY IT RAINED AND NORA PLAYED INSIDE THE GREAT MANSION.

NORA, I HAVE TO SPEAK WITH YOU. IT'S VERY IMPORTANT!

I KNOW WHAT IT'S ABOUT, AUNT MARSHA. I GUESS THAT I MUST HAVE FRIGHTENED YOU LAST NIGHT, BUT YOU NEEDN'T BE SCARED OF ME!

THEN YOU RECALL THOSE... AWFUL THINGS YOU SAID. IT'S NOT RIGHT FOR A LITTLE GIRL TO *LIE* THAT WAY.

THEN WHEN I COME HOME, I'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO.

I WASN'T LYING. I JUST TOLD YOU WHAT UNCLE STANLEY SAID TO ME. I WON'T TELL ANYBODY BECAUSE NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE A LITTLE KID ANYWAY!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

YOU SHOULDN'T CONTINUE TO TELL THESE TERRIBLE *FANTASIES* OF YOURS, NORA. THEY COULD DO YOU A LOT OF HARM!

THEY'RE NOT FANTASIES. THEY'RE THE TRUTH. UNCLE STANLEY IS ALIVE. HE'S DOWN IN THE BASEMENT WHERE YOU CAN SEE HIM FOR YOURSELF!

I SEE YOUR ROTTEN, LITTLE PLAN NOW. YOU WANT ME TO GO INTO THE BASEMENT TO VIOLATE THE CONDITIONS OF THE WILL AND YOU'LL GET ALL OF THE MONEY. IT WON'T WORK!

ISN'T ONE MURDER ENOUGH, MARSHA? MUST YOU ALSO DESTROY AN IN- ! NOCENT CHILD!

OF COURSE IT WAS, AUNT MARSHA. I TOLD YOU... UNCLE STANLEY ISN'T DEAD. HE'S DOWN IN THE *BASEMENT!*

FROM DOWN THERE HE CAN CONTROL EVERY- THING IN THE HOUSE SO I WOULD BE CAREFUL IF I WERE YOU OR YOU MIGHT HAVE A BAD *ACCIDENT!*

WAS THAT UNCLE STANLEY'S VOICE?

CRASH!!

THE WIRE STRIKES LIKE A SNAKE BUT ITS FANGS MISS THEIR MARK.

AS MARSHA RUNS FROM NORA'S PLAY-ROOM, SHE HEARS THE SOUND OF HER HUSBAND'S CAR PULLING INTO THE DRIVEWAY.

HONEY, I'M HOME. DID YOU HAVE THAT TALK WITH NORA?

YES, I DID... I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT WHEN I COME DOWN SOMETHING WILL HAVE TO BE DONE WITH HER!

PAUL'S HOME! HE'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT THAT FIEND DISGUISED AS A CHILD SHE'S NOT FOOLING ME FOR A MINUTE. SHE'S DOING ALL THIS!

PAUL, HELP ME! I'M FALLING!

I'VE GOT YOU, MARSHA. YOU'RE ALL RIGHT, BUT WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT MADE THE STAIR RUG BECOME TAUT LIKE THAT?

UNCLE STANLEY IS ALIVE. NORA HAS BEEN TELLING THE TRUTH. HE'S IN THE BASEMENT AND HE'S MANEUVERING THE HOUSE TO REVENGE HIS DEATH.

YOU'RE MUTTERING NONSENSE. UNCLE STANLEY IS DEAD AND I'LL *PROVE* IT TO YOU!

OH, IT'S HORRIBLE. PAUL, PLEASE TELL THEM TO PUT HIM... IT, BACK INTO THE GROUND!

I'M SORRY TO PUT YOU TO ALL THIS TROUBLE, GENTLEMEN. MY WIFE WAS HAVING NIGHTMARES ABOUT HIM STILL BEING ALIVE!

I UNDERSTAND COMPLETELY, SIR, AND DON'T YOU WORRY BECAUSE IT WAS NO TROUBLE AT ALL!

STRANGE! YOU'D THINK THAT THEY HAD COMMITTED A CRIME OR SOMETHING, FROM THE *GUILTY* LOOKS ON THEIR FACES!

A HALF HOUR LATER THEY WERE HOME...

BUT WHY DO YOU WANT ME TO KEEP THIS FROM NORA?

BECAUSE I BELIEVE THAT YOU WERE RIGHT TO SUSPECT HER AND I WANT HER TO THINK THAT SHE STILL HAS US FRIGHTENED. TONIGHT, IF SHE GOES SLEEP WALKING AGAIN, WE'RE GOING TO FOLLOW HER!

THAT NIGHT...

SHE'S GOING DOWN INTO THE BASEMENT. SHOULD WE FOLLOW HER?

CERTAINLY. SHE'S OUR ONLY WITNESS THAT WE'VE VIOLATED THE WILL, AND AFTER TONIGHT I'LL MAKE SURE THAT SHE NEVER WITNESSES ANYTHING *EVER AGAIN!*

SHE'S GOING INTO THAT ROOM.

THAT'S WHERE SHE SAID THAT UNCLE STANLEY *LIVED!*

PAUL, LOOK!

IT TOOK THEM A FEW SECONDS TO ADJUST THEIR EYES TO THE LIGHT WHICH CAME FLOODING AT THEM FROM THE FORBIDDEN ROOM. THE THING INSIDE, HOWEVER, HAD BEEN WATCHING THEM CONSTANTLY.

YOU SEE, UNCLE STANLEY ISN'T DEAD!

SO LONG AS MY *BRAIN* IS ALIVE, THEN I'M ALIVE. UNFORTUNATELY, YOU DID MURDER MY BODY, MAKING THIS CUMBERSOME DEVICE NECESSARY, AND YOU MUST BE PUNISHED! YOU ARE, AFTER ALL, EVIL PEOPLE.

FLEEING IS FUTILE BECAUSE I AM IN ENTIRE CONTROL OF THE HOUSE. MY INVESTMENTS IN SCIENCE HAVE ALWAYS PAID OFF WELL FOR ME, ESPECIALLY NOW!

WILL THEY BE ABLE TO MAKE IT TO THE FRONT DOOR, UNCLE STANLEY?

...YYIIIEEE!...

NO... I GUESS NOT!

END

The PAY-OFF

EX-AIR FORCE PILOT JACK CHILDRESS WAS IN THE CHARTER PLANE BUSINESS...HE HAD A FAST TWIN-ENGINE SIX-SEATER AND HE OPERATED IN THE CARIBBEAN, WORKING OUT OF MIAMI MOST OF THE TIME! OTHER PILOTS KNEW CHILDRESS WOULD TAKE ANYTHING OR ANYONE TO ANY DESTINATION WHETHER IT OR THEY WERE LEGAL OR NOT! AND CHILDRESS KNEW HE'D BE RICH SOME DAY...THERE'D BE A BIG PAY-OFF SOONER OR LATER!

WRITER-JOE GILL

I'M JACK CHILDRESS, OWNER AND PILOT. I HAVE REPAIRS TO MAKE BUT I GUESS THEY CAN WAIT. WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO?

ER...LET'S HAVE A DRINK AND I'LL TELL YOU WHAT I WANT.

N1210

LET ME PUT YOUR BAG IN THE PLANE.

NO! I...I DON'T MIND CARRYING IT.

IT'S SIX NOW. CAN WE TAKE OFF AS SOON AS POSSIBLE?

HOW LONG DO YOU HAVE, MISTER? TILL THE OFFICE OPENS MONDAY MORNING? OR IS IT A BANK?

D-7301

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I...MAYBE I'D BETTER FIND SOMEONE ELSE!

MISTER, IF YOU *PAY* ME ENOUGH, I'LL FLY YOU TO HELL...JUST SO IT'S *A ROUND TRIP!*

I'VE GOT A NEW IDENTITY...I'LL LIVE LIKE A KING WHERE I'M GOING....I ARRANGED EVERYTHING WITH THE DICTATOR! I'LL PAY OFF WHEN WE LAND!

YOU'VE GOT IT MADE. GIVE ME YOUR NAME FOR THE FLIGHT PLAN AND THE EXACT DESTI-NATION. I'LL GO AND....

NO! NO NAMES.. AND YOU DON'T FIND OUT WHERE WE'RE FLYING TILL AFTER WE'RE IN THE AIR.

CHILDRESS WAS NO LILY... HE'D BEEN AROUND AND HE FILED A FALSE FLIGHT PLAN, TO CARRY THREE FISHERMEN SOUTH TO THE FLORIDA KEYS.

I'VE GOT ENOUGH GAS FOR 450 MILES, MISTER. IS THAT FAR ENOUGH?

PLENTY, CHILDRESS.. AND DON'T GET IDEAS ABOUT THIS BRIEFCASE ...IT MIGHT BE FATAL!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

NOW...WHAT'S THE DESTINATION, MISTER?

YOU SAID YOU'D FLY TO HELL...THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE GOING!

YOU INTENDED TO KILL ME ALL ALONG, DIDN'T YOU? HOW ARE YOU GOING TO LAND THE PLANET

I'LL FLY IT THE REST OF THE WAY, CHILDRESS.

I NEEDED YOUR PLANE... AND YOU GAVE ME PERFECT COVER LEAVING MIAMI!

YOU HAD IT ALL PLANNED, DIDN'T YOU?

THAT'S RIGHT, CHUMP! I COULDN'T LEAVE YOU ALIVE TO BLAB TO THE FUZZ!

THAT'S THE WAY I FEEL, MISTER... BUT I DON'T NEED A GUN!

WATCH IT, YOU DUM... EEEEEEE!!!!!!

SO LONG, SUCKER!

YEE HA HA HA

THERE'S GOT TO BE $300,000 IN HERE! HMMM...A PASSPORT IN THE NAME OF BENJAMIN GARVEY AND A VISA FOR GUIANA.

I'LL JUST USE GARVEY'S VISA. I'LL TAKE HIS IDENTITY. THE FUZZ HE FIXED IN GUIANA NEVER SAW HIM, GARVEY SAID.

AT THE DIRT AND GRASS AIRSTRIP, THE LOCAL JEFE DE POLICIA WAS WAITING....

LOOK, EXCELLENCIA. THE PLANE IS LANDING.

I HAVE EYES, FOOL!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

CHIEF CROZADA? ARE THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE?

SI, SENOR. A CAR IS WAITING. MY MAN WILL CARRY YOUR LUGGAGE FOR YOU.

WHERE ARE MY QUARTERS? A MODERN HOTEL OR...?

YOU SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED A PLACE WHERE YOU WOULD NOT BE SEEN.

POLICA

I GUARANTEE NO PURSUERS WILL EVER FIND YOU, SENOR. NOW, RELAX...WE WILL RIDE FOR AT LEAST AN HOUR TO REACH THIS PLACE.

POLICA

THIS IS WHAT I HAD IN MIND, CHIEF! PLENTY OF PRIVACY!

STOP, RAFAELO!

PUT THE BAG DOWN, THEN REMOVE YOUR SHOES AND OUTER CLOTHING.

YOU DOUBLE-CROSSING CREEP!

THE WORLD IS FULL OF DISHONEST PEOPLE, YANQUI THIEF! THE BAG...THEN TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTHES!

I COULD *KILL* YOU BUT SOMEONE MIGHT LEARN OF IT. THIS WAY, I SHALL LET THE JUNGLE DO IT FOR ME. ADIOS, SENOR....

WAIT...YOU CAN HAVE THE MONEY. I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH IT IS... *I DIDN'T EVEN OPEN THE BRIEFCASE!* PLEASE TAKE ME OUT OF HERE!

I SHALL SEE YOU IN HELL, SENOR.

THERE WAS NO KEY IN HIS CLOTHING, EXCELLENCY.

I CAN PRY IT OPEN WITH MY KNIFE, RAFAEL!

AS THE BRIEFCASE LID WAS FORCED OPEN WITH THE KNIFE IT ACTIVATED AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE... AND A DEAD THIEF GOT HIS REVENGE!

BAARROOM

END

The INQUISITION

STORY BY FRANK PERGOLA

Night descended like an opaque mist upon the town while the fires slashed away at the dark, reluctantly giving way to the black. It was this blackness that brought a special sweetness to El Juez[1], one that he had not known in any of his former parishes. For him, the Spanish night held a serenity which he savored at the end of each day. The crystalline bursts of flame illuminated his face as he stood thoughtfully by the window, surveying the scene in front of him. He was finding it harder and harder to concentrate on sleep, for the stench of charred bodies always seemed to seep into his room, no matter how much he tried to keep the odor out. The death of these heretics of course was necessary, but their odor after death was more of a nuisance than were their sacrilegious ravings and rantings in life. El Juez's position as chief judge of the Inquisition in this district gave him final decisions over such matters of life and death.

But for El Juez, the stench of death itself could not ruin the brilliant beauty of a Spanish sunset. The fading sun was quilted against the night like burning ribbon of yellows and reds. The beauty of the sunset kept El Juez entranced as he drew his patio doors to a close.

As usual, he left a candle lit, trying to mask the scent of ashen decay outside in the courtyard. The trembling flame of candle competed with the flames which dutifully consumed the prisoners at the stakes in the courtyard. The light from both flames gave his face an exotic appearance, as his smooth face with its triangular features caught and reflected the light. His impassive expression showed the lack of compassion on his face. His life was a battle against these disciples of the devil, and they would destroy his religion with no second thought with their heresies. Yes, righteousness was in his hands, and death came quickly to those who challenged it.

Just as he was about to slip into sleep, the patio doors blew open in a loud bang. The wind fought with him for control of the doors. As he started to close them, he noticed one lone cloud in the otherwise clear night sky. It played innocent games of changing shapes and colors with him as if he were a child idly waiting for some entertainment. He found himself, just for a moment, trying to find a shape for this cloud. He decided it was most like a goat, with its fluffy, white hue and poorly defined horns.

He climbed back into his bed, making the heavy oaken posts shake only slightly. The wind had given his candle a new brilliance, and his room seemed to shake with the mad flickerings of the flame. As he fell to sleep, a strange dream seized control of that part of the mind which never sleeps. Faces, countless numbers of faces, seemed to be watching him. They showed no emotion, nor did they speak. They did not move toward him. They just watched him, with no emotion. In all the faces, there was one who showed a trace of emotion, and for a moment El Juez thought he was looking into a mirror. Yet, he could not be sure.

Stone cold. El Juez woke up stone cold, and in a sweat. As he did, the patio doors once more banged insistently against the walls. He sat frozen in his bed, afraid to approach them, as if these faces were outside his doors, waiting to gaze upon him. Eventually, he shakingly walked to the doors and closed them firmly, once more noticing the cloud, and also noted that it now had definitely moved closer to his quarters as well as had assumed the goat shape he had given it. The cloud seemed to be watching El Juez just as carefully as El Juez was watching it.

He once more returned to his bed. But as he was about to climb into it, the doors splintered at the sound of the wind rushing into his room with the screams of a thousand banshees. As the wind filled his room, his candle became a mad torch and had ignited his sheets and draperies. The cloud that had playfully floated outside was now in the room, slowly seeping in with patience and intentional slowness. The wind was throwing him around his quarters, so he grabbed one of the oaken posts on his bed in order to anchor himself against the tempest. As he did, the flames leaped at him from the candle that had consumed everything else in the room. Only El Juez was left. So he thought, until the sheer panic let go of him long enough for him to gaze through the flames and smoke to see one other figure in the room, and he recognized it immediately. It had been in his dream; the one face which, as it was doing right now, betrayed a hint of emotion. There stood the great winged figure, with a dreamy smile on his leathery face. As El Juez burned away into dust, the smile stayed on the visitor's face. Maybe Satan, the Prince of Darkness, liked those nice Spanish sunsets, too.

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[1]English translation: "El Juez", in this case, one of the highest in the inquisition hierarchy.

SCIENTISTS ALWAYS ATTEMPT TO UNRAVAL THE MYSTERIES OF BIRTH AND DEATH! VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN TRIED AND FAILED! HE CREATED LIFE, BUT HIS CREATION WAS A MONSTER! HUGO VAN STEIGER SWORE THAT HE *WOULD NOT FAIL!* VAN STEIGER'S CREATION WOULD BE A PERFECT BEING... NOT A MONSTER! ONLY ONE MORE PIECE WAS NEEDED TO COMPLETE HIS HUMAN PATCHWORK PUZZLE! HE NEEDED A LIVING BRAIN AND WOULD STOP AT NOTHING TO GET IT!

BRAIN FEVER

WRITER MIKE PELLOWSKI

HEY, MATE! LEND ME A HAND HERE! I'VE HIT THE BLOKE'S COFFIN!

GOOD! LET'S HURRY UP AND GET OUT OF HERE! THIS *PLACE* GIVES ME THE CREEPS!

DIGGING *THEM* UP DOESN'T WORRY ME NONE! IT'S *THIS* CEMETERY! I'VE HEARD SOME STRANGE STORIES ABOUT *THIS* GRAVEYARD!

WHAT'S TROUBLING YA? GRAVE ROBBING NEVER TIGHTENED YOUR GUTS BEFORE!

I'M GLAD THIS IS THE *LAST* TIME WE'LL HAVE TO PULL *THIS* CART UP TO THE VAN STEIGER'S PLACE!

IT'S A LONG HAUL, BUT IT'S WORTH IT! THE DOCTOR PAYS US PLENTY FOR OUR *MERCHANDISE!*

D-7698

THE HUGE WOODEN DOOR JERKED OPEN AND DR. HUGO VAN STEIGER CONFRONTED HIS "BUSINESS" ASSOCIATES.

STOP POUNDING ON THE DOOR LIKE AN IDIOT! BRING IN THE BODY, MAN, *BRING IT IN!* I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU! YOU'RE LATE!

I'M SORRY WE'RE LATE, GOV! IT TOOK US A WHILE TO DIG UP THIS STIFF! THEY ONLY PLANTED HIM THIS MORNING. HE'S AS FRESH AS A DAISY, HE IS!

SPARE US YOUR WITTICISMS! MY FATHER AND I ARE NOT AMUSED BY YOUR SENSELESS QUIPS! PUT THE BODY ON THE TABLE!

SORRY, MISS! SINCE THIS IS OUR FINAL SHIPMENT, WE WON'T BE SEEING YOU AGAIN! NOW, IF YOU'LL PAY US, WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY!

THIS *ISN'T* THE *FINAL* SHIPMENT! MY FATHER HAS ANOTHER JOB FOR YOU! WE NEED *ONE* MORE THING!

I WANT A MAN'S BRAIN! I'LL PAY YOU WELL FOR ONE!

WE CAN'T USE THE BRAIN OF A CORPSE BECAUSE BRAIN CELLS DETERIORATE TOO RAPIDLY!

THE SUBJECT MUST BE DELIVERED TO US, *ALIVE!* THEN, WE'LL REMOVE HIS BRAIN FROM HIS SKULL!

KLINK

CHUNK!

NO!

ROBBIN' GRAVES IS ONE THING, BUT SNATCHING SOMEONE SO YOU CAN CUT OUT HIS BRAIN IS SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN! WE DON'T WANT ANY PART OF THAT!

GET OUT, THEN! YOU'RE OF NO FURTHER USE TO US!

EVERYTHING I NEED TO CREATE A PERFECT MAN, I HAVE, EXCEPT A LIVING BRAIN! I WON'T BE CHEATED OUT OF THE SUCCESS I DESERVE, OPHELIA! TOGETHER, *WE* WILL GET A BRAIN FOR THE EXPERIMENT!

PERHAPS TONIGHT YOU'LL BE ABLE TO LURE A SUITABLE VICTIM INTO THE CARRIAGE! WE MUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO ABDUCT ANYONE WHO'LL BE MISSED!

YES, FATHER!

VAN STEIGER WAS A MAN OBSESSED! MORALS, SCRUPLES, ETHICS, LAWS... NOTHING ELSE MATTERED WHEN SCIENCE WAS INVOLVED. SUCCESS WAS ALL THAT MATTERED!

IT'S ALMOST DAWN, FATHER. THIS HAS BEEN ANOTHER FRUITLESS ENDEAVOR!

I'LL DRIVE PAST THE CEMETERY! SOMETIMES VAGRANTS SLEEP OFF THEIR DRUNKENNESS THERE. PERHAPS WE'LL GET LUCKY!

GET LUCKY? INDEED THEY DID AS THEY PASSED THE GRAVEYARD...

FATHER, LOOK! LOOK! THERE IN THE CEMETERY! DO YOU SEE HIM? IT'S A MAN, A VAGRANT IN A DRUNKEN STUPOR!

NOW I SEE HIM! LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK, OPHELIA!

HE'S PERFECT! THE MAN IS A BOHEMIAN! A GYPSY WON'T BE MISSED! HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN STUMBLING AROUND THE CEMETERY IN A STUPOR ALL NIGHT! LET'S GET HIM INTO THE CARRIAGE!

OPHELIA AND VAN STEIGER LOADED THEIR CARGO INTO THE CARRIAGE! SOON THEY WOULD HAVE THE BRAIN THEY NEEDED FOR THEIR EXPERIMENT!

LATER THAT AFTERNOON, THE GYPSY AWOKE TO FIND HIMSELF IN A HORRIFYING PREDICAMENT!

M...MY GOD! W...WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT IS THIS? WHERE AM I? W...WHY AM I TIED DOWN? FREE ME! FREE ME!

AHHIEEE...

IT APPEARS THAT OUR GUEST HAS REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS!

YES! I'D BETTER CALM HIM BEFORE I PREP HIM FOR THE OPERATION!

ARE YOU POLICE? ARTRO, THE GYPSY, HAS COMMITTED NO CRIME! I REMEMBER NOTHING ABOUT LAST NIGHT! WHY AM I A PRISONER? HOW DID I GET HERE?

CALM DOWN, MY BOHEMIAN FRIEND. WE'RE *NOT* THE POLICE! WE BROUGHT YOU HERE TO *HELP* US WITH OUR *EXPERIMENT!*

WE'RE GOING TO GIVE YOUR BRAIN A NEW HOME!

A-A *NEW* HOME FOR MY B-BRAIN? EXPERIMENT? I DON'T UNDERSTAND! WHA...?

HEH HEH! THE FOOL *DOESN'T* UNDERSTAND! SHOW HIM, FATHER! *SHOW HIM*, SO HE'LL UNDERSTAND! *LOOK*, MY FRIEND! *NOW*, ARE YOU ENLIGHTENED?

THIS IS MY CREATION! I'M GOING TO BREATHE LIFE INTO IT AND YOU'RE GOING TO HELP ME, GYPSY! I'M GOING TO PUT *YOUR* BRAIN INTO *THIS* BODY!

STOP! YOU CANNOT DO THIS TO ARTRO! WAIT! I BEG OF YOU, DO NOT DO THIS! PLEASE! PLEASE!

SILENCE THAT BABBLING IMBECILE! WE'LL BEGIN THE TRANSPLANT IMMEDIATELY! ALL IS IN READINESS!

QUICKLY, THE GYPSY WAS PUT OUT OF HIS MISERY.

GOOD! THAT'S BETTER! SHAVE THE PATIENT'S HEAD WHILE I GET MY INSTRUMENTS! FROM THIS MOMENT ON, WE REWRITE THE LAWS OF SCIENCE AND NATURE!

MAN STEIGER PREPARED TO PLAY GOD! NOT ONLY DID HE TAKE A MAN'S LIFE, BUT HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO CREATE NEW LIFE!

THERE! WE'RE FINISHED!

THE BRAIN IS STILL ALIVE!

MINUTES LATER...

NOW IT'S YOUR BRAIN! BEFORE THE NIGHT IS OVER, YOU'LL BE ALIVE AND THINKING FOR YOURSELF!

TWILIGHT CAME. THE FORCES OF NATURE CO-OPERATED WITH VAN STEIGER. LIGHTNING STRUCK THE RODS ON THE STEEPLES AND PROVIDED HIS CREATURE WITH LIFE-GIVING ENERGY!

THE OMINOUS THUNDER-CAPS PASSED AND THE FULL MOON BEGAN TO RISE! EVIL WAS IN THE AIR! THE SCENT OF DEATH WAS ON THE WIND!

VAN STEIGER'S CREATION STIRRED! IT DREW IT S FIRST BREATH! THE THING WAS ALIVE! HUGO VAN STEIGER HAD SUCCEED-ED. THE OPERATION WAS A SUCCESS!

HE'S ALIVE, OPHELIA! *HE'S ALIVE!!* WE'VE DONE IT! QUICKLY! UNSTRAP HIM!

YES, FATHER!

THE MONSTER WASN'T HOSTILE OR AGGRESSIVE.

Y-Y-YOU MADE ME! I WILL OBEY YOUR COMMANDS!

T-THE MOON! A *FULL* MOON! NO! **NOOO!**

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE!

WHEN THE FULL MOON REACHED ITS ZENITH, A STARTLING TRANSFORMATION BEGAN TO TAKE PLACE!

ON THEIR FEVERISH HUNT FOR A BRAIN, VAN STEIGER AND OPHELIA HAD MADE A HORRIFYING MISCALCULATION WHEN THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR MARGINAL ERROR!

THEY'D OBTAINED A BRAIN, BUT IT WASN'T A HEALTHY BRAIN! THE BEING THEY CREATED WAS PERFECT, BUT THE BRAIN THEY PUT INSIDE OF IT WAS NOT!

THE BRAIN WAS SUFFERING FROM A MYSTERIOUS, DANGEROUS AND UNDETECTABLE MALADY! ARTRO, THE GYPSY, SUFFERED FROM LYCANTHROPY!

LYCANTHROPY IS A DISEASE OF THE BRAIN! ARTRO WAS A WEREWOLF! NOW, HIS WEREWOLF BRAIN WAS IN A GIGANTIC, SUPERPOWERFUL, PERFECT BODY!

EEEEK!

RUN, FATHER! RUN!

MY GOD! I'VE CREATED A MONSTER! HOW? HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

THE SAVAGE BEAST OF THE SHADOWS TURNED ON HIS CREATORS. ONE BY ONE THEY FELL VICTIM TO HIS SHARP CLAWS AND SNAPPING JAWS!

NOOO!

OPHELIA WAS THE FIRST VICTIM OF THE MONSTER'S WRATH!

VENGEANCE WAS SWIFT, JUST AND UNMERCIFUL!

OPHELIA? OPHELIA? SOB S-SHE'S DEAD! THE MONSTER HAS KILLED HER!

VAN STEIGER WAS NOT EXCLUDED FROM THE MOON BEAST'S REIGN OF TERROR! AS THE SHADOWS OF DEATH FOGGED UP AND CLOUDED HIS BRAIN, THE DOCTOR KNEW THAT HE'D SINNED AGAINST ALL THAT WAS HOLY!

G-GOD... FORGIVE ME! AHHH...

VMAN CANNOT RE-DO THE GOOD THAT GOD HAS DONE... AND ONLY GOD CAN UNDO THE EVIL THAT MAN HAS DONE!